

ACORN

The Journal of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario



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The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc.
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A society incorporated in 1933 for the preservation of the best examples of the architecture of the province, and for the protection of its places of natural beauty.

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Presidents' Reports

Since I have been involved with the Architectural Conservancy - from the cramped office quarters after-hours at Spadina, to our move to the Ontario Heritage Centre with the use of its luxurious oval boardroom, where of late our meetings have been relegated to the basement conference room (equally suitable, but somewhat less inspiring), and now with pending relocation of our office to the fourth floor -- we have witnessed the growing pains of our organization, and indeed the broadening concept of heritage conservation provincially and federally.

On a specific scale, we have witnessed the demolition of the Talbot Block in London: an exercise that has exhausted all those involved, and defeated all our hopes, in the retention of this significant - and crucial - commercial city-block.

Elsewhere we have commented on the restoration and renovation of the Barnum House - the signature, as it were (up to this point) of the Architectural Conservancy. I believe all our members know my personal feelings, as well as those of Ontario Council, so it will not be necessary to repeat them here.

Taken together, these two events represent bad omens for the future of heritage preservation. In spite of these setbacks, we remain resolute to our cause; though our spirits are dampened, we return to our task. Much of what is achieved by the Conservancy is due to the strength, determination, and continuity of its membership. Credit is due the branches and their executives, and the tireless individuals who seem to make a full-time habit of promoting our cause. I cannot possibly thank everyone, but would like to recognize those who have assisted at Ontario Council.

I wish to thank the retiring members of Council: Roy Turner, Past President; John Boulden, Vice-President; and Spencer Higgins, Senior Vice-President, who is allowing his name to stand for Member-at-Large.

For his tenacity and dedication, recognition goes to Alec Keefer, who has been ably representing the ACO in numerous aspects; as a member, and past-chairman, of the Ontario Heritage Alliance; member of *The Minister's Advisory Committee* on "new" Heritage Legislation, as well as President of Toronto Region Architectural Conservancy.

Together with Alec, we should recognize Paul Dilse and Julia Beck, along with ICOMOS Canada, for their work in organizing the Conference on Vernacular Architecture, which we understand was the largest of its kind on this subject in Canada. There are many members present at our annual meeting whom I have seen attending the lectures, and they will support my claims on the success of the conference.

For organizing and hosting our Annual General Meeting, we extend our thanks to the Brant County Branch of the ACO, and specifically Cheryl Wood, and Mr. & Mrs. Michael O'Byrne.

I wish to thank Anne Hughson, our Executive Secretary, for her untiring efforts in our office, amidst an ever-growing pile of boxes and ACORNS.

Thanks go to Marg Rowell, ACORN Editor, for her dedication and perseverance, in spite of late submissions from branch editors (not to mention delinquent presidents ...).

Throughout my two-year term many members have supported me, and doubtless rescued me in my work-load, and I wish to thank specifically A.K. Sculthorpe, and Julia Beck - both for keeping me on my toes, and for assuming responsibilities which I may have neglected.

ACHIEVEMENTS

By-Law Revisions and Amendments

Following the long discussion at AGM 91, Ontario Council has formed a committee to update the by-law to incorporate the latest amendments, and to revise the wording to all-inclusive, or non-gender-specific, wording. Work on this is nearly complete and, as suggested at the AGM, will be reviewed by our legal counsel before being submitted for final approval. It was hoped that this would be finalized in time for this meeting, for distribution, but time constraints proved otherwise. For those who would like a copy of the updated by-law, it should be available in the near future from our head office in Toronto.

PRESIDENTS' MEETINGS

On a motion at AGM 91, an annual meeting of branch presidents with Ont. Council president will become part of the AGM. It was agreed that we should strive for quarterly meetings, and at this year's meeting it was suggested that at least one other meeting be scheduled at a time other than the AGM.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

Due to constraints in time and budget, I have been unable to coordinate the regional meetings, but I hope that this idea will come to fruition during this coming year, along with plans for expanding a programme of presidents' meetings.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURING AT ONTARIO COUNCIL

Several committees have been formed or restructured, along with a mandate to establish clear terms of reference for these committees. Of particular note, a Membership Committee has been formed, and a document detailing the procedures for establishing new branches has been accepted by Council.

The Program Development Committee, perhaps the most active committee of Council, as demonstrated by the success of its programs - notably the Conference on Vernacular Architecture, and the new Designing for Conservation Workshop Series - continues to break new ground in promoting both the mandate and the profile of the ACO.

A suggestion, by members of this committee, to establish a committee on Policies and Ethics has not gone unheeded, and it is hoped that this crucial group will form in the near future.

Lacking this formal arrangement at the moment, numerous documents and reports have been accepted by Council regarding procedures:

- *AGM Planning*
- *New Branches*
- *Requests for serving as umbrella for other heritage organizations.*

ACORN

We are pleased to report that after several years of promising, we are finally managing to publish four issues of our journal per year. The spring issue is intended as the Annual General Meeting Issue, and though somewhat sparse this year, it is intended that it will be regular weight, though with a special format, including agenda for the AGM, Advisory Board Reports, Council Reports, and special events and articles.

The Publications Committee is still attempting to gain book-rate status for postage; part of the requirement has been fulfilled by publishing four issues. Compli-

ance with the separation of membership fees from Acorn Subscription on membership application/renewal forms will speed us along with our application for reduced post-al rates.

FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

We are currently without a strong Fundraising Committee, but this will undoubtedly be rectified by the incoming executive of Council.

We would like to remind you of the upcoming Fundraising Event being held June 14th, 92 at the RCYC in Toronto. Details were posted in the last issue of Acorn.

We would also like to recognize and extend our appreciation to the Ministry of Culture and Communications for financial assistance. Aside from a yearly grant for our Operating Fund, the ACO has received grants for our publications, for the Designing for Conservation Workshop series, and for the Conference on Vernacular Architecture.

CAMDEN EAST HOUSE UPDATE

Despite the decline in the economy we are still hopeful that the Camden East house will find a suitable buyer; we have received a number of offers recently, none of which suited our terms, but nonetheless we expect some movement shortly, having continued listing the property with a local Realtor until early June. Likewise we are looking into other methods of utilizing the property.

FINAL REMARKS

It is with a certain amount of regret (and to be honest, some relief) that I step down from this chair. It has been an educational and rewarding experience, though at times frustrating and consuming. A part of my regret is due to the number of tasks that I was unable to complete in my term as your president, but I intend to remain active at the Council level, and to work towards fulfilling these projects as past-president. I look forward to working with your new Executive, and offer my support to your new President Julia Beck, as we move forward in our mandate of education of ourselves and the public, the promotion of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, and the preservation of Ontario's heritage architecture.

Gilles Miramontes A.O.C.A.

It is presumptuous for a president who has been in office for only a week to write "a report. However, in this week following the conference and annual general meeting, there has been time to listen to comments and to reflect.

People who were able to look at the conference objectively report that it was very successful: registration reached 200, the maximum the conference room could accommodate; the seventeen speakers were praised for their wit as well as their wisdom; the tour of Brant County, open to those who registered for the conference or the annual meeting, provided an opportunity to see "Chiefswood", the home of Pauline Johnson, and hear a report from the committee working for its restoration (see Acorn, XVI 3, 1991, pp. 14-16). Several people asked if the ACO was planning another conference on the same theme. In the last week, there has been neither time nor energy to plan but the possibility of holding another conference on Vernacular Architecture in Ontario in two or three years will be considered. Meanwhile, the papers, or at least synopses of the papers, presented at this year's conference will be published.

The annual general meeting was also rewarding. We were disappointed that Francois Varin, Chairman of Canadian Committee on Vernacular Architecture, ICOMOS Canada, who had been billed as guest speaker at the banquet, could not be present. However, we were delighted the Dr. Jan Schroer was able to take his place. Dr. Schroer, whose very special background includes degrees in Fine Arts and Business Administration and experience with museums, challenged us all when she spoke of the importance of collecting enough data to support our demands for the designation, conservation and restoration of buildings. Posters lining the walls of the banquet room, talks by branch representatives and an ambitious group of walking tours provided by the Brant County branch continued the theme of vernacular architecture established by the conference.

As discussions on a new Ontario Heritage Act continue, many of us fear that the new Act will not be any more realistic than the present one. Much of the legislation will still be permissive and may be left in the hands of municipalities which frequently choose to ignore the powers they possess to protect the built heritage. With these concerns in mind, the annual meeting passed the following motion:

Whereas the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) was founded in 1933 to preserve Ontario's architecture, and whereas the ACO has been operating under the existing Heritage Act and knows full well its shortcomings and inadequacies, it is recommended that:

- *the proposed new heritage legislation in Ontario must alleviate the state of confrontation that currently exists between LACACs and their Councils and between the process of the description of heritage properties and their owners;*
- *the proposed new heritage legislation and policies, programmes, and processes it creates, must clearly establish a system by which priorities are uniformly and universally instituted and protection and funding are related to those priorities;*
- *the status of LACACs be elevated from advisory committees to standing committees of Municipal Councils;*
- *statutory protection be available for any site in either private or public hands;*
- *provincial designation be made by the Crown in the absence of a LACAC or for sites of provincial importance when municipal councils refuse to act;*
- *"permanent" designation be available for sites of provincial significance;*
- *the process now named "designation" be renamed and that all confrontation now associated with the process of description take place at an appeal board level, the appeal board to be an at-arms-length board similar in nature to the current Conservation Review Board but with more financial and logistical support and a higher profile.*

and forwarded it to Hon. Karen Halsam, Minister of Culture and Communications and to the Ontario Heritage Alliance.

The meetings on the weekend of 24-26 April were the result of co-operation between the ACO and ICOMOS Canada, which jointly sponsored the conference, between various branches and committees of the ACO, and between the ACO and the City of Brantford. We particularly thank the

Brant County Branch for accepting the responsibility for hosting the annual meeting and for integrating it with the conference. Only a few years ago, branches were sometimes described as water-tight cells, disinterested in each other or in the provincial organization and showing an interest in the community only in times of crisis. There are many signs that this is changing and many ways in which individual members can assist in effecting the change. They can for example, agree to serve on Council committees, attend events organized by other branches or by Council, encourage two branches to jointly sponsor an event or provide support for a new branch. Like other incoming presidents, I have plans and dreams for the ACO but I know I can do very little without the support and co-operation of members across the province.

Julia Beck

Editorial

Another Annual Meeting has come and gone and a very successful one it was. Having been involved in the 1991 Annual Meeting I know how much effort goes into them and all persons who worked so hard on the most recent one are to be congratulated for a job well done.

The Vernacular Conference was a first for the ACO and hopefully other conferences will follow in the future. It is part of ACO's mandate to educate and enlighten us about our architectural heritage and this the conference certainly accomplished.

Summer is fast approaching and with it gardening and holidays take up some of our spare time. However, I hope we don't slack off too much on our ever present need to be watchful of developments in our villages, towns, and cities when it comes to our built and natural heritage.

Although great strides have been made in making municipal and provincial and yes, even federal government officials more aware of our concerns for our environment we still cannot, and probably never will be able to take a back seat to the dangers of ill conceived plans that could affect our built heritage and our places of natural beauty. We need to be ever present, ever watchful and ever ready to work towards our goals of preservation. We need to network with other groups of similar interests and aims. There is still strength in numbers. We all hope that the *New Ontario Heritage Act* will be the best we could possibly have. And on

that note we wish you all a happy and beautiful summer.

Vernacular Conference and Annual Meeting Report

VERNACULAR CONFERENCE

Well, if you weren't there you missed an excellent Vernacular Architecture Conference and Annual General Meeting weekend.

Friday April 24, and part of Saturday April 25, were devoted to the Vernacular Conference with a number of very informative speakers. It was held at the Woodland Cultural Centre, an excellent facility with a wonderful museum devoted to the history of the Six Nations Indian People.

It is planned to publish the proceedings of the conference and in a future issue of ACORN devote a large section of the journal to a summary of the presentations at the Vernacular Conference.

SANDERSON CENTRE RECEPTION

On Friday evening the reception at the Sanderson Centre was well attended. Tours of the restored theatre were given (see article on Sanderson Centre in the issue). The evening included an illustrated talk on Breweries of Ontario by Ian Bowering.

BRANT COUNTY TOUR

The three hour bus tour focused on Brant County, with its unusual juxtaposition of building materials. It is an ideal place to study vernacular architecture in Ontario. The county seat and principal urban area, Brantford produced brick. Nearby Paris made buildings from a wide variety of local materials -- cobblestone over rubblestone, gypsum for plaster veneer, brick, fieldstone and limestone. The Six Nations Indian Reserve, in the southern part of the county, used the area's extensive tree cover for log and frame buildings. The tour provides a comparison of the materials used in the nineteenth-century vernacular buildings of Brantford, Paris and the Six Nations, but also refers to turn-of-the-century examples that ignore vernacular traditions.



Porch detail of 176 Wellington Street, Brantford
Michael Keefe



176 Wellington Street, Brantford
Michael Keefe

The tour took us past many of Brantford's fine old buildings. The extensive commentary was excellent and the hand out provided was extremely detailed.

The tour went to Paris where a number of buildings are of cobblestone construction. Many of these buildings were built by Levi Boughton who settled in Paris from Upper New York State.

Onondage Township was settled by the Six Nations Indians, who built their dwellings of log and frame. Some of these still remain.

A special treat was the tour of Chiefswood (see ACORN XVI 3 Winter 1991). We were presented with a history of the building and slides of Chief G.H.M. Johnson and his family which included E. Pauline Johnson. Our tour guide, Mona Staats, dressed in a native costume, explained the plans for the restoration of the house which will begin soon.

We continued on into Ohsweken to view the Six Nations Council House (now the Public Library) built 1863-64, John Turner, architect.

We travelled on the Fourth Line past a log house and a plain Classical Revival house behind a picket fence.

The tour went past well-known St. Paul's Her Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks built in 1785, and returned to the Woodland Cultural Centre.



House on River Road
Michael Keefe

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting dealt with the formal aspects of business such as the minutes of the 1991 Annual Meeting, the financial report, appointment of auditors, President's report (included in the issue) and the election of officers and members-at-large.

Two important motions were put forth, one regarding the New Ontario Heritage Legislation (quoted as part of Julia Beck's President's Report) and the other motion proposed by Peter Stokes that the meeting support that the Government of Canada, its



Classical Revival on the River Road
Michael Keefe

Ministry of the Environment, and Historic Sites and Monuments Board be asked to recognize, officially, Chiefswood as a building of architectural and historical significance.

GUEST SPEAKER

The guest speaker was Dr. Jan Schroer who encouraged us to have a solid data base on building research. Dr. Schroer offered the one percent solution. One percent of taxes should be set aside for culture. One-half of one percent should go to heritage. Where would we spend the money for the next ten years?

BRANCH REPORTS

A number of branches had displays of the architecture in the area.

BRANT COUNTY

Mona Staats spoke about the planned restoration of Chiefswood. The roof and foundation will be done first. An interpretive centre will be built and the house furnished with reproductions of the original furniture that is stored in the Woodland Cultural Centre. The Brant County Branch can take donations for Chiefswood. All present were urged to write their MP re: the preservation of Chiefswood.

HURON COUNTY

John Rutledge showed a video of the Via Rail line between Guelph and Goderich. Of special interest was the fate of the railway bridge over the Maitland River known as the Menesetung Bridge. The bridge was purchased for \$18,000 and work on a boardwalk over the bridge as part of a hiking trail is nearly complete.

LONDON REGION

Michael Baker showed slides of Vernacular Architecture in London, including a cobblestone cottage and Ontario Cottages with centre gables and mass produced ornamentation.

Some 1930s houses have hipped roofs, rug brick, cottage dormers and three part windows.

NORTH WATERLOO

Bob Rowell spoke about Vernacular Architecture in the City of Waterloo. The photos were mounted on a display board and different styles and building materials were described. Many of the houses were of the gable to the street variety.

OXFORD COUNTY

This branch has developed a set of slides that illustrate all elements of buildings. Work sheets and a book are available for use of school children in learning about their local architecture. The slides are an invaluable teaching aid.

PORT HOPE

Sue Gardiner spoke on the Vernacular Architecture of Port Hope. It descended from the Regency style and used local materials such as brick and clapboard.

Sue described the bandshell project which should be completed by July 1st.

Walking tour pamphlets should be ready for distribution soon.

QUINTE REGION

Basil Kuglin outlined the Vernacular Style as found in their area. Slides depicted various components of the style showing gables and wings on the houses. The slides were organized to show the transition from simple designs to the more complex.

TORONTO REGION

Alec Keefer treated us to a slide show of old black and white photos from the Armstrong, Beere & Himes Collection of Toronto in the 1850s. Toronto has seen so many changes that this set of slides of photos of Toronto's early architecture is marvellous to see. The photos were originally used to try to persuade Queen Victoria to choose Toronto as Canada's capital.

WALKING TOURS OF BRANTFORD

Two choices were available for tours. Victoria Square and an old industrial area or St. Basil's Community Housing Project. We chose St. Basil's. We were greeted at the school by Michael Keefer and the project architect Brian McCulloch of the firm Fryett, Shifflett Associates. We toured both schools, St. Basil's and St. Ann's (ACORN XV 1 Spring-Summer 1990), with the plans in hand that showed how the schools could be converted to community housing, pending the outcome of an OMB hearing. The apartments that are planned make maximum use of the large classroom and as much natural light as possible. Some of the apartments are designed to be two storeys in

height. They range from one to three bedrooms in size and promise to be very attractive living spaces.

The Madonna Centre will unfortunately not survive since the city is insisting on that space for parking. Of the three build-

ings it would be the hardest to convert since it contains many small rooms where the nuns used to live. We wish them well and hope the project succeeds. We will keep you informed of further developments.

Marg Rowell

ACO 1993 Annual General Meeting *Our 60th Anniversary* *will be held in* **Port Hope** *Further details in* *subsequent issues of* **ACORN**

Comments on the 1992 Annual General Meeting and Conference

The Annual General Meeting and the Workshop on Vernacular Architecture (or should it be Building?) which preceded it was an exciting ACO event in Brantford, thanks to the Brant County Branch, hosts of the conference, and the organizers and coordinators of the program. It was a very full schedule with relatively short presentations made end to end allowing no comment or questions between sessions except on a less formal basis at coffee or lunch breaks. Although that lack of participation was unfortunate the fact that everyone could enjoy all sessions, and did not have to make that agonizing choice between subjects when talks are given concurrently, was a special boon. Many thanks to those who organized it thus.

Subjects were varied, some particularly fascinating and all of interest: you will no doubt be awaiting the publication of the proceedings which we hear is now in the works. But we were especially interested in the presentation from Thunder Bay of the early twentieth century "skirted" houses of that twinned city, where the lower storey was finished in brick, the upper part, usually only a half storey in effect, clad in shingle with a distinctive flared skirt forming the transition. Presumably this has a purely functional origin where frame houses were brick-veneered on the ground storey, some

4" or more in thickness, the shingle cladding above not even 1" in depth, the flare or "skirt", the curved transition capping the top of the thicker brick veneer below. Brick veneer presumably was more durable at the lower level and grander of course, and, for economy, shingle was used to replace it above, so developed by local builders into a vernacular style, a particular Thunder Bay variant. However this also has a precedent in more stylish houses of the day such as those in the English Domestic Style designed by Eden Smith and others about the same time. Often roughcast or brick bases dissolved similarly into shingle-covered upper storeys or tiled gables. But this is truly "Architecture", still with a capital A, whereas Thunder Bay's is building with a big B, or architecture with a small a.

Then there was an informative discourse by David McClung on the double-entrance Mennonite houses in the Selkirk area of Haldimand-Norfolk, the arrangement from long-established historic precedent. The main fronts appeared often like double three-bay houses with doors flanked by windows, each door entering a principal room, one the kitchen, the other the living chamber. The presentation showed both plans and slide illustrations of these houses.

Curiously this writer knows of a similarly planned house built by a Scot, Gavin Robertson, about 1855, in Wainfleet, who engaged in legal and accounting tasks for a number of his neighbours and other clients. Robertson made an entrance into the Best Parlour for his formal business, the family entrance being alongside into the larger Kitchen/Keeping Room at the front of the house which took in the space normally occupied by the Entry Hall.

Two other presentations concerned Southern Ontario's Cobblestone heritage, particularly that in Sydney Township near Belleville and in the Paris area, the latter place visited on Saturday afternoon. Another subject was the re-introduction of polychrome brick decoration represented by new vernacular building in the Toronto area. There is a distinct revival there and elsewhere but we were dying to offer that the modern brick used and the patterns employed are not nearly so subtle as original historic examples. Practitioners who may be so inspired still have a lot to learn from the originals.

There were other equally interesting subjects including a discussion of what is 'Vernacular Architecture' indeed, an outline of the development of the native people's long-house, and a presentation of the native cultural tradition. You will, no doubt, learn more of these worthwhile deliberations in the forthcoming publication on this most successful event.

However one of the sadder spectacles of our brief tour around the area was a visit to Chiefswood, birthplace of the noted Canadian poetess, Pauline Johnson. Built in the late 1850s of sawmill plank construction (i.e., board layers offset here to form keys for stucco outside and plaster inside), this is a formal but romantic design resembling the Italianate in form and detail. In the early 1960s the women of the Six Nations were helped by Jeanne Minninnick to achieve a furnishings and decoration scheme to display it as an historic house. Unfortunately some measures to improve the building's appearance at the time have proved to be contra-conservation resulting in structural damage now needing costly remedial work. So far a rather costly study has been completed which also provided a conceptual design for an interpretation centre in a new structure nearby, leaving the community too little funds to put the vital conservation of Chiefswood in hand. For some reason the Federal Government does not consider the house of any particular interest, yet from its

historical and cultural associations alone, not to mention its vital connection to the native community, as well as its site and setting and rather special construction, it surely should qualify. Or so the ACO believes, which those at the Annual General Meeting duly confirmed, this to be conveyed to those who should be concerned.

Peter John Stokes

The Sanderson Centre - Brantford

The grade 7 and 8 classes at Coronation School Brantford, were recently involved, in a integrated unit which studied the changes in our community. Our group, after a tour of the downtown, decided to study the Sanderson Centre.

Our final project was such a success that Audrey Scott asked us to write an article about the Sanderson Centre for submission to the ACORN.

As the Temple Theatre changed to the Capitol Theatre and then to the Sanderson Centre, not only the name changed, the inside changed as well.

There have been several changes made to the building throughout the years. We concentrated on what we thought were the five most important changes from talking to the public and the performers.

CHANGE 1

Motion Pictures to live entertainment.

Originally the Sanderson Centre, then known as the Temple Theatre in 1919, was a vaudeville house and this was live entertainment. The change to motion pictures occurred in 1930 and the name changed from the Temple Theatre to the Capitol Theatre. Live entertainment was brought back in 1985 and the name changed from the Capitol to it's recent name, the Sanderson Centre.

CHANGE 2

After Motion pictures it went to Inside Colouring Scheme.

When the Temple Theatre was opened to the public in 1919, the inside colours consisted of bright orange, blue and green. As the years went on so did modernization which changed the colours to maroon, gold and dusty rose. These colours still exist today.

CHANGE 3

Ticket Prices

Back in 1919 ticket prices were 5 cents a seat. Now the average ticket price is about \$35.00 a seat. The Sanderson Centre's average ticket sales gross between \$476,280 and \$595,300.

The Sanderson Centre tries to keep their ticket prices as low as possible so they can break even or possibly make a small profit.

CHANGE 4

The Interior.

When the Temple Theatre first opened in 1919, the fabulous auditorium seated 1600 people per show. The chairs were and still are folding chairs much like the chairs you would find in a cinema today. The chairs that are in the Sanderson Centre today now are almost identical to the original chairs from 1919.

The colour of the chairs matches very well with the colours in the auditorium. The chairs are a dusty rose colour, and are made of a very soft and smooth material which makes the chairs very comfortable.

The number of seats has been reduced from 1600 to 1134 since the Temple Theatre changed to the Sanderson Centre in 1990.

This leaves more room in the isles and easy access to the exits in case of an emergency or just going to the lobby for a beverage.

When the Temple Theatre was first built there were no wheel chair ramps for the disabled. This meant that the disabled people couldn't go and watch any shows. Now, with the modernization of the Sanderson Centre, access is available to all disabled individuals.

CHANGE 5

The Dressing Rooms

The last and final alteration to the Centre is the Dressing rooms which now include three single rooms or one large room that is located on the second floor.

All of the above alterations make for an excellent Sanderson Centre.

Islay Mcfadden

Dave Dix

David Durnford

Sara Kopacsi

Steven Windle

Kevin Money

HISTORY OF THE SANDERSON CENTRE - BRANTFORD

If you liked opera you were out of luck in Brantford in 1931. The Grand Opera House was torn down in that year. Its location was at West and Darling Streets where the Salvation Army Citadel now stands.

The reason for its destruction? The Talkies. Movies were shown since 1919 at the Temple Theatre on Dalhousie, which became the Capitol and then the Sanderson Centre.

Built in that year for \$350,000 the Temple eventually installed equipment behind the stage which was connected by wires to the projection room in order to create sound. Provision for all types of music was possible and the cost for the sound system in 1929, was \$30,000. The system was installed by Famous Players, who purchased the building in 1927.

Before the talkies, Vaudeville had been popular, with the company orchestra. The 1925 director, Harold Vansickle came back to his home city because of the reputation of the Temple among Ontario theatres. Jule and J.J. Allen owned the dual purpose building as well as 50 other theatres in Canada at

that time. It had a stage almost the size of Toronto's Royal Alec, 94' x 30'. There were 1457 seats arranged without a balcony. The building had fire safety features and three electrical systems.

Its narrow street front was and is impressive with its stone semi-circular arch with Renaissance style radiating white stones. There was a high frieze with moulding at the top, in a scale with the next-door building. A large window with many muntin-divided panes filled the upper arch. Heavier vertical mouldings divided the window into three lights. The panes were arranged horizontally: two, barrier, four; barrier, two. A tall centre chimney was functional rather than artistic. The T-shaped 'Temple Theatre' sign was functional but intended to be decorative as well.

The interior was splendid, designed to copy the lavish interior appointments of European Palaces, even though the gold and marble of the latter were replaced with sandstone, plaster and brass.

As designer the city chose Thomas Lamb of Scotland who also designed the Capitol in New York (world's largest) and the Elgin And Wintergarden Theatres in Toronto.

Important features in construction were the lack of wood as a building material, a suspended ceiling on steel girders (to avoid pillars), a sprinkler system, five exits, and seats with a direct view of the stage. The interior designs included great swags, borders with intricate designs, and large medallions, on the curved surfaces of the ceiling. There was a large circular chandelier, and a fresco over the stage. At that time, as now, we were told that the interior colours were dazzling in bright maroon, blue, and gold. The chairs were comfortable, even then with folding seats allowing reasonable passage. The 1962 renovations had replaced seats, removed private boxes, and changed the entrance and lobby. At this time a marquee was added.

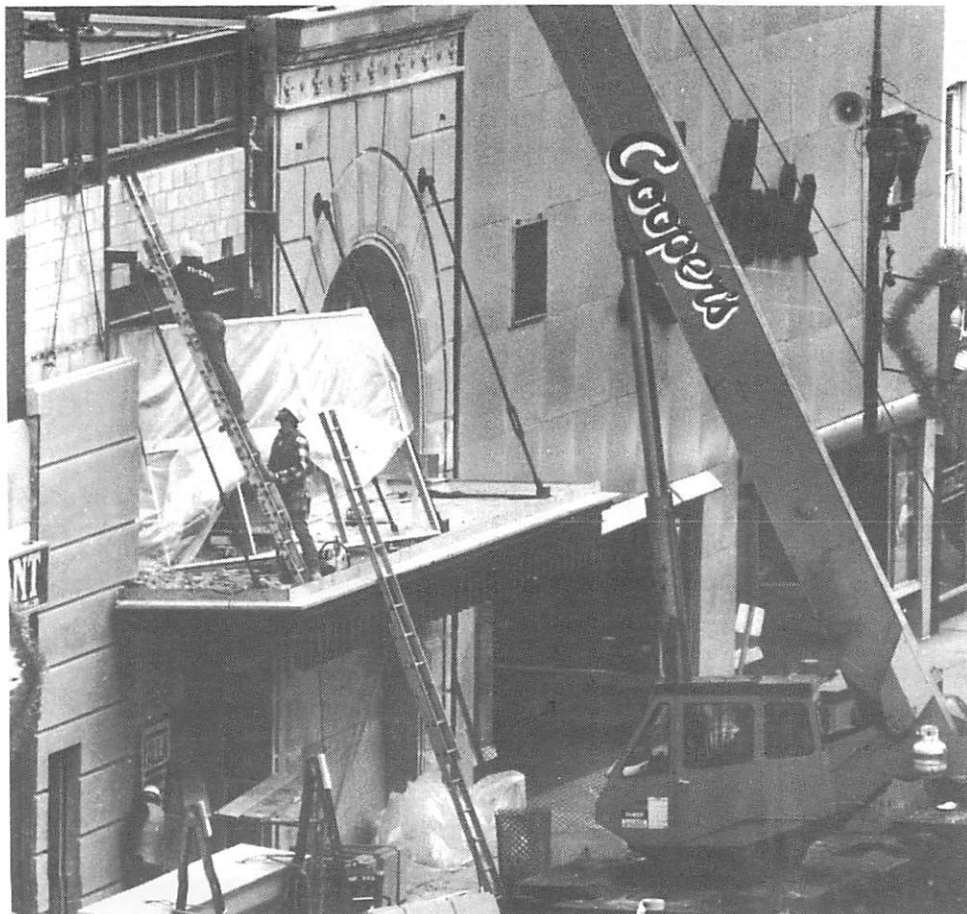
Arguments went on for years about the destiny of the building; the restoration, the funding, and the name. Eventually the Temple - Capitol became the Sanderson Centre, restored to its original 1919 splendor.

Inside, the original colours were used in the restoration with dusty rose chairs. There are currently only 1134 seats - down from the original for reason of safety. The seats and aisles are wider spaced with a raised rear section rather than a balcony.

The story of the revival of the Capitol - Sanderson began in 1977 when Arthur J. Kelly organized an unsuccessful concert to raise money to purchase the building from Famous Players Theatres. Alderman Dave Neumann felt at that time that touring companies could find a home in the neglected building.

The purchase by the city finally took place in 1985 for \$425,000. An interim scheme to turn the building into three small theatres was fortunately defeated. The building was designated under the Ontario Heritage act in 1987, and then the fundraising began for its restoration. The Ontario Government contributed 2 million and the Federal Government 1.4 million through a job creation program. Patrons sponsored seats, special performances were given, and the general public contributed as well as the government. The Elsie Sanderson foundation donated \$500,000 in 1990, while in 1992 \$206,000 was received from the Brantford Heritage Theatre Foundation.

The February 20, 1988 'Expositor' quoted Paul Shepherd of Sankey, Acrop and Shepherd Architects, of Toronto who undertook the project indicating that "the entrance and lobby will be made more impressive and useful while retaining a building in 1919 style." The entrance and



Renovations to the Capitol - Sanderson 1990
Brantford Expositor

lobby were to be enlarged. A popular eating place, the Café Pierre was demolished to allow the expansion. The back entrance and lobby are expected to be completed in September of 1992.

The current plan for the Sanderson adds the dressing rooms for 42 at the rear, and a wide aisle to the south with exit doors to the auditorium. A workshop and rehearsal hall were also added. Accoustical doors assist with sound reproduction.

The lobby is now spacious and unpretentious, with two levels and a divider for in/out accessibility. The décor is elegant but restrained, with colours in warm greys brightened by brass handrails. The carpeting is dark red. Nineteen-nineteen style lights are worth \$5,000 each. Contributors to the restoration are honoured by individual plaques on the east wall.

The auditorium has been divided for decoration into sections. There is a mural around the stage with a series of geometric panels forming a square around a central diagonal crossing. The strips forming the crossing are belted near the centre with jewel-like medallions. The central circle is splendid in gold relief with scallops and a radiating wheel. Medallions in the geometric sections are also splayed with decorated pattern plastered on bright blue. Modern Administration offices, with Mr. Pat Marcotte as manager, are on the second floor.

Phase one of the restoration involved electrical and mechanical improvements (\$500,000). Phase two, consisted of the renovation and expansion over the lobby and entrance (1.3 million). Phase three, centered on the auditorium, sound system, lighting and rigging, and was undertaken by Van - Con Construction (2 million).

The building, as restored, is now a national landmark, because of its authenticity.

One hundred performances were hosted in 1987, and Hagood Hardy returned 'home' in 1989 to introduce the restoration of the auditorium. A gala opening with Anne Murray as the star, was held on September 8, 1990 with the new curtain and seats in place.

Auditorium restoration was carried out by David Hannivan & Co., of Toronto. The firm also restored the Toronto Pantages, Elgin, and the Wintergarden Theatres.

Sources such as historic photographs showed the fresco in decorative patterns done in stencil. Original chairs, the original carpeting, and the stripped down walls provided clues to the original colours and designs. Plaster mouldings were intricately

replaced as was the stencilling. Gilding with intricate gold leaf currently created a breath-taking effect. Mock stonework has also been painted underneath the side arches.

Interestingly enough, the new Sanderson Centre, with its 'live' shows, is fulfilling the function of the old Temple Theatre, where musicians and Vaudeville were interspersed with silent movies.

Then came the talkies, radio, television, and the decline of movie shows. But live theatre has a major place (look at Stratford and Niagara-On-The-Lake) as was proven by the determined citizens of Brantford and their backers who contributed to the revival, along with all other levels of government, of the Sanderson Centre. They accomplished, in spite of difficulties, its restoration and rehabilitation as a people place for the Brantford citizens and tourists of the 1990s and of the years to come.

Audrey Scott (Writer)
Researchers:
Alan Scott
Laurie Jaieson
David Gray
Laurie General (Typist)

Sources

1 Collectors Edition Program September 8, 1990
 (Coloured reprint of ceiling decoration)

2 The Brantford Expositor
 May 12, 1979, by Doug O'Neil
 February 20, 1988, A Grant Step for Movies
 November 30, 1988
 November 25, 1988
 January 9, 1990
 January 11, 1990
 April 7, 1992

3 Grand Memories, October 1990 - The Plays The Thing by Marie Schantz



Original stage and ceiling of Capitol Theatre showing chandelier and plasterworks but not the fresco.
Brantford Expositor

Branch Reports

Quinte Region

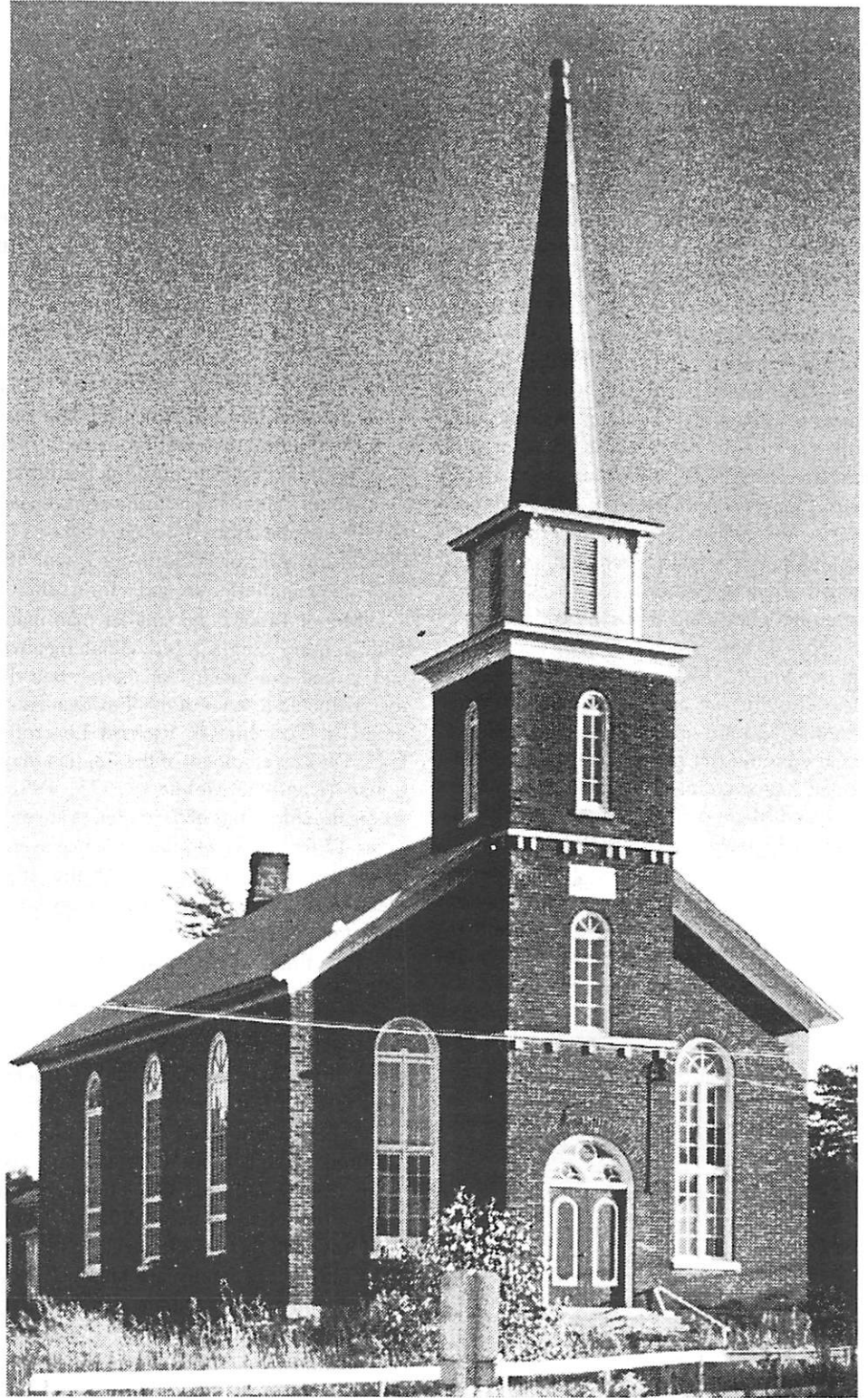
MOUNT TABOR CHURCH

Standing as it does on a cliff overlooking the mill pond at Milford, the old Mount Tabor Church, though abandoned a quarter century ago by the United Church, remains one of the chief ornaments of Prince Edward County. ACO's Quinte Region Branch used it as the starting point for one of its first events, a tour of the Milford - Black Creek - Waupoos area, on May 6, 1984, when eighty of us trooped through the dark old building. It had been purchased, with admirable foresight, by the Township of South Marysburgh as a community facility, for the fair ground and ball diamond are just beside, but Mount Tabor was hardly used except at fair time, when it usually houses the baby show and an evening concert, while handicrafts are customarily displayed in its old Sunday school hall behind.

We like to think that our tour helped arouse interest in Mount Tabor. In November of the same year a theatrical group formed with the double aim of providing a community activity and preserving the worthy old building. They called themselves The Marysburgh Mummies, by implication drawing on North and South Marysburgh as well as Athol and parts of Hallowell, all parts of the ancient Marysburgh or Fifth Town of the original settlement of the Loyalist era.

The Mummies put on a play that winter, and have continued to do one or two a year, including several Christmas pantomimes, and these have been well-attended and profitable. The Mummies have paid for some improvements such as new wiring and an attractive new interior paint job. As managers of the Playhouse on behalf of the Township, they want the auditorium to be useful for all sorts of displays and concerts, so that it can begin to pay its way. They have been drawing up plans for improved seating, better access indoor washrooms, a new heating system, and a better stage.

One of the striking features of the building is the capacious U-shaped gallery which wraps around three sides of the interior in typical old Methodist style. Originally, the preacher's pulpit was raised perhaps five feet off the floor (there are remnants of a set of little semi-circular steps) and the preacher will have stood in full view of all, framed by the fifteen-foot-tall window-like niche behind him in the end wall.



Mount Tabor church
M. MacRae and A. Adamson. Hallowed Walls

Architectural historians will be interested to know that the implement that moulded the great plaster arch so handsomely, back about 1865, is still in the attic: a metal template at the end of a radius stick on a leather pivot. And the attic holds other treasures, including an object like a rough half-barrel that we presume was the center-

ing used to help form some of the window arches, and fragments that look to be of the original communion rail, and some original window sash.

The Marysburgh Mummies are fully cognizant of the heritage importance of the building's exterior, and are dedicated to preserving it. Perhaps some of the zeal of old

Dr. Braden, who laboured to build Mount Tabor with his own hands, back in 1864-66 has rubbed off on them.

The wrap around gallery and great arch, where once the preacher stood, and the focus of all attention, are the main elements of an important heritage interior. The ancestry of Mount Tabor's layout can be traced back through the miraculously preserved 1809 interior of the famous White Chapel in Picton, and the now-restored galleried auditorium of the late 18th-century Hay Bay Church (for our area is the cradle of Canadian Methodism), right to the lovingly preserved "Room" that John Wesley had built for him in the earliest years of his ministry, about 1740, and which you can still marvel at when you visit Bristol in England.

In Wesley's auditorium, the preacher in his high pulpit is silhouetted against a large arched window (which needs a curtain to soften the glare) and thousand of halls and churches do have a window in this position. On our March 1992 ACO walking tour of Demorestville we admired a trompe-l'oeil window, Gothic in an Italianate frame, painted on the flat plaster wall by an artist named Barton about 1870, behind the pulpit in the old Methodist church there, a distant reference, perhaps, to Wesley's original scheme.

If the later Sunday school hall were not stuck right on behind, we could argue that Mount Tabor's handsome blind arch could legitimately be made into an actual window if we happened to want one. And here we



Barton trompe - l'oeil window at Demorestville United Church, painted c. 1870, is actually perfectly flat
Rodger C. Greig

get into the question of what changes to this striking and "characteristic" heritage interior are permissible, and what are not.

It is true that there is only about sixteen feet between the two side wings of the gallery. Scenic designers (and your reporter has personally struggled with this problem through half a dozen of the Mummers' productions) and actors might look longingly at the thought of removing these gallery wings to get the whole 34 foot width for open stage area. But that would not only spoil this bit of Methodist heritage but deprive us of a very valuable theatrical asset as well - one which Wesley himself evidently made use, namely having the audience wrapped closely around three sides of the performer.

Mount Tabor is like a little Shakespearian theatre, the Globe or the Swan, based on the old inn-yard or cock-pit idea, with the audience in galleries around a thrust stage.

Mount Tabor is no smaller than many 18th century English provincial theatres, and is laid out much like them. See the reconstructed interior of the theatre at Richmond in Yorkshire in Richard Leacroft's book *The Development of the English Playhouse* (London, Methuen, 1973, 1988), where the side wings of the galleries are only 16 or 17 feet apart and the audience seems to hang out over the stage. Even the larger theatres, like Covent Garden or Drury Lane, of that era were equally intimate.

Five times as big as Mount Tabor, but still intimate, is the festival stage at Ontario's Stratford, built to Tyrone Guthrie's specifications and Tanya Moiseiwitsch's design. It has been of world-wide influence over the past forty years. How Guthrie in his earlier experimental career would have admired Mount Tabor's thrust stage and wrap-around audience and built-in possibilities for action on many different levels. And how odd that his architect was Robert Fairfield, whose family are famously connected with our own Quinte area right back to Loyalist days.

Heritage though Mount Tabor's interior may be, we can justify, I think, quite a few alterations as long as the grand scheme is retained, of the amphitheatrical gallery focusing on the handsome arch. Here are some that seem necessary and not harmful.

Cut a little dog-leg staircase down through the gallery each side so that actors and technicians can make use of the upper levels. Add a little balcony over the stage at each side, for upper-level action.

Cut the blind arch into an actual proscenium arch (without spoiling the plaster

moulding) so that actors and scenery can be seen behind or can actually move forward and back. (This coincidentally gives us something like Palladio's famous 1580 Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza.)

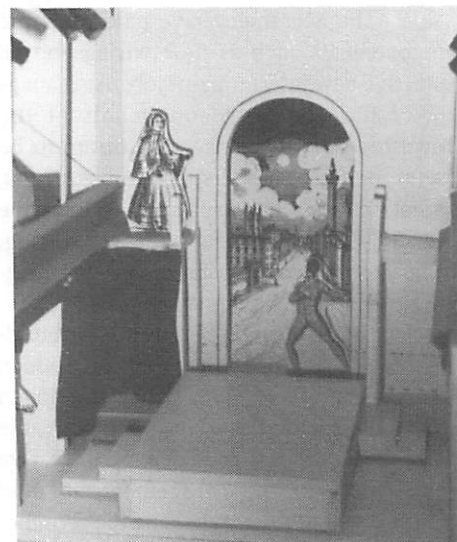
Sacrifice a window each side for exits upstairs and down, and make entrance to new washrooms through one of these. (The coloured glass is 20th century, and anyway can be used elsewhere; the actual brick arch need not be spoiled; and no, a neatly designed iron fire escape need be thought no more detrimental to the design of the exterior than a flying buttress on a Gothic cathedral). Add slim metal railings to gallery and stairs, also for safety.

Flatten the auditorium floor (which was built up to a slant when modern pews were put in) for easy walking and spacious exhibition and refreshment areas all around the walls, while canting the central seating as sharply up as you wish, even to join the gallery perhaps.

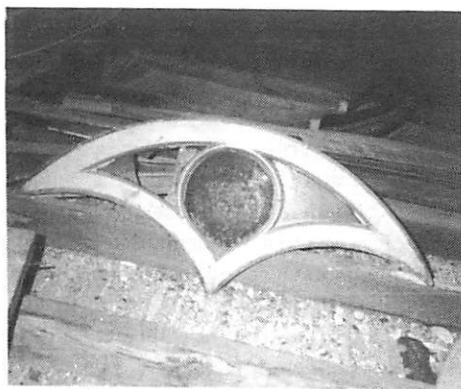
Make the stage area one foot high, wall to wall, for graceful access from every side, room for a whole orchestra to sit down on occasion, and then raise whatever areas your performance demands with portable platforms and stairs.

We show a slice-through model suggesting how some of these things might look, though the useful little dog-leg staircases suggested to be cut in the far corners of the gallery remain invisible.

We also show the view of Mount Tabor from MacRae and Adamson's book *Hallowed Walls*, where some puzzlement is expressed at the combination of Georgian fan-topped windows with the Italianate door transom. Of course, we know the answer.



Mount Tabor model: proscenium arch opened and little balconies added
Rodger C. Greig



Original Italianate sash in attic at Mount Tabor, Milford
Rodger C. Greig

Original sash must all have been of the "Florentine" pattern, of two round arches and a circle within a round arch. Parts of at least six of these actually survive in the attic, and we show one here. These were replaced with leaded coloured glass (at the same time as there was a new pulpit and new curving modern pews on a sloping floor) early in this century: the bills survive in the County Archives. Windows got blown out, as did the whole top right-hand corner of the front brickwork, in a violent lightning-storm (September 1965, I think: I remember cowering in my bed three miles away) and the present fan-style sash are an attractive but thoughtless replacement, which do however



South Bay church was smaller twin of Mount Tabor, keeps its "Florentine" windows.
Rodger C. Greig

match the storm windows on the sides.

We show a similar window from the slightly later Methodist church at near-by South Bay, a smaller building but virtually Mount Tabor's twin. The South Bay windows have some alternating coloured panes, a thing Mount Tabor evidently never had: someone with a hankering for colour did smear poster paint roughly on the panes of the sash that are now in the attic, just to show people what stained glass might be like, one imagines, but the glass itself is all clear.

Rodger C. Greig

Port Hope

QUEEN ANNE ARCHITECTURE

Alex Keefer, from the Toronto Branch, came down to address our Branch on the Queen Anne Style, on March 31. The meeting was held at the Carlyle Restaurant which is situated in the old Bank of Upper Canada building, circa 1859, built in the Italianate Style. Mr. Keefer showed slides of the Queen Anne Style and spoke humourously and interestingly. Refreshments were served after.

REGISTRY OFFICE

The Registry Office in Port Hope has been emptied and its files taken to the Cobourg office, necessitating a trip to that town when a lawyer or member of LACAC wants to look up the date of a house. A new use for the old building, an antique in itself, is as an archive office. Built to hold important papers, it is fireproof with its metal roof, iron shutters and brick-vaulted ceiling. Delegates from the ACO Branch and the Historical Society addressed the Town Council to this effect in late March. We await developments.

ARCHITECTURE OF ITALY

Phil Carter addressed the Branch on the Architecture of Italy, on April 21. The meeting was well attended and proved interesting and informative.

WEST SIDE DEVELOPMENT

A town planner addressed a large group of Port Hoppers explaining a proposed development on the west side of Port Hope. The recent density levels put out by the Provin-

cial Government are applicable in Toronto and other urban areas, not small towns and certainly not Port Hope where it would damage what assets Port Hope has. The proposed density of over nine thousand new citizens and the locating of a commercial area or plaza in this development would lead to the further deterioration of the downtown commercial district. The proposal was not well received.

Marion W. Garland

Brant County

A highly successful "Heritage Happenings", a series of events connected with heritage, was held at Rivington Grange on Highway 53, the home of John Closs and Rose-Marie Huysuntruyst Closs, the summer of 1991.

Ralph Cook, long-time member of the association sponsoring the event, the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Brant County Branch, conducted tours of the home's exterior, while John Closs told of interior details and plans in regard to the mid-1800s structure with its distinctive bargeboards and window moulds.

Cathy and Steve Money looked after admissions to the tour, while Norma Holland and Alan Scott distributed refreshment tickets. Mike O'Byrne, president of the organization, Cheryl Wood, Secretary, and Nellie Anderson, were in charge of the refreshments. A slide show of interiors of previous tours was shown.

About fifteen write-ups of properties studied by the Conservancy were available free of charge, while Collector Cards (hastinotes) and other items were sold by Jackie Evans. Audrey Scott, executive secretary, convened the event and arranged displays of newspaper clippings and property photographs. Contributing to the photographs and slides were Violet Fair, Agnes Whittaker and Shirley Sills. Joan DeKat taught architectural details during a crafts session with some of the children present, while clippings were contributed by Edna Meader.

The former home of Colonel Clegg, Rivington Grange was a fitting setting for a heritage event stressing the value of retaining and restoring structures of merit built with love and care in the previous century.

Ralph Cook presented an award on behalf of the Conservancy to the owners of Rivington Grange, Mr. and Mrs. Closs for their ongoing restoration of the property.

Brant County Branch, in conjunction

with Friends of World Heritage Grassroots, was successful in lobbying for the retention of the old Craig farmhouse at 477 West St. Brantford. The lobby was extensive with thirty or more documents.

The slate for 1992 appears to offer some changes and the financial picture of the Branch remains bleak. It appears that the responsibility for same is discouraging to Local Council Members or potential members.

Audrey Scott

North Waterloo Region

THE OLD WATERLOO PUBLIC LIBRARY

When the Scottish American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie provided grants for libraries, the first city in Canada to receive funding was Windsor, in 1901. The grants continued until 1917 with the last being Ottawa (West Branch). A total of 111 libraries in Ontario and an overall 125 in Canada were built through Carnegie funding.

In order to receive such a grant the town had to write a letter to the Carnegie Corporation stating its population, mill rate and other data that would encourage funding. In 1902, the mayor of Waterloo David Bean wrote such a letter and receive a prompt reply that the town of 3,574 would receive \$10,000 for a Free Public Library. (The Carnegie Corporation archives has preserved the correspondence to and from Ontario towns and cities on 35 microfilm reels). However, before work could proceed, the town had to provide a site and promise to support the library with 10% of its tax dollars. Charles Moogk, Waterloo's first architect and engineer drew the plans and submitted them to the Carnegie Corporation for approval. A lot was purchased in 1903 at Albert and Water (Dorset) Streets and a formal ceremony took place that same year to lay the cornerstone, inscribed CARNEGIE 1903. For the next two years, Charles Moogk undertook a large portion of the carpentry work himself, and on Nov. 1, 1905 the Carnegie Waterloo Free Library opened its doors to the public. The two storey library was constructed of Milton red pressed brick with Credit Valley sandstone

basement. In a traditional Classical Revival Style, the front pediment extended over the main entrance and the metal roof was surrounded with a balustrade. Bracketed cornices supported the overhanging eaves and moulded bands of brick designs adorned the exterior front and sides with their numerous large windows. Three stained glass windows across the front, one inscribed LIBRARY, complemented the overall design. Today the exterior remains virtually intact. In 1985, the City of Waterloo LACAC designated the structure as an historical and architectural landmark.

In 1909, after appealing unsuccessfully to the Carnegie Corporation for further funding, the City completed the second storey for a meeting hall where it served as such until 1931 when it became the Children's library.

The last major change took place in 1961, when the basement was renovated for the Children's Department, leaving the second floor available for the non-fiction collection. In 1966, a new library was built across the street at 35 Albert Street. The former library then housed the Waterloo

City Police Force and then the Waterloo Regional Police Force, Division #3, until the Fall of 1991.

Last January the City of Waterloo commissioned Arnot, Page Associates to conduct a study to determine if the building would be suitable to house the City's art collection by artist Woldemar Neufeld. The consultants have found that the building is not suited for this purpose.

Presently, the future of the old Carnegie Library is undetermined.

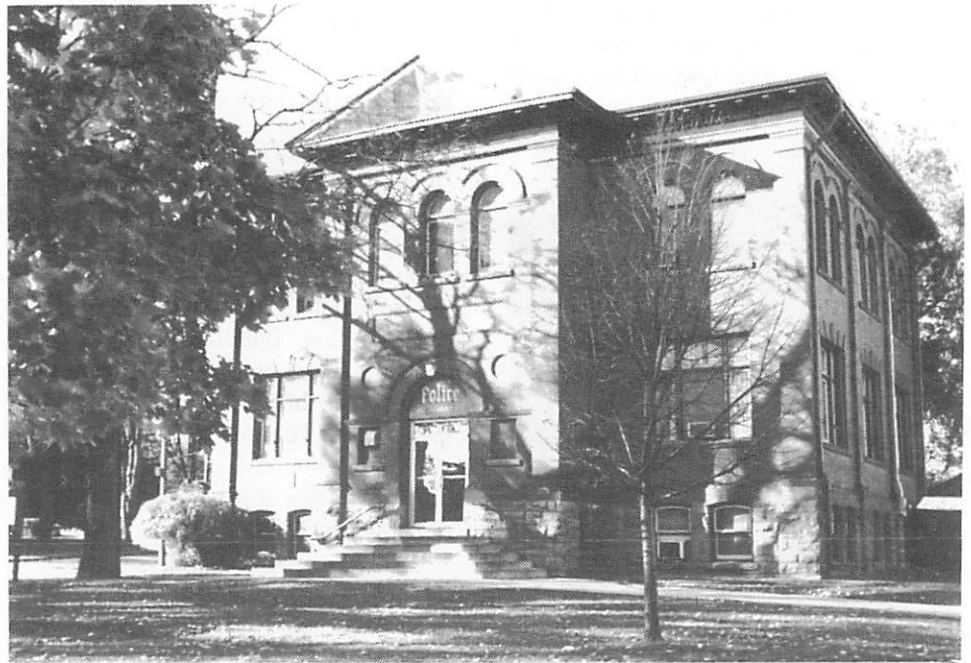
Ontario statistics from 1983, indicated 79 remaining Carnegie libraries; 15 have been destroyed and 17 are being used for other purposes. Libraries in Woodstock, Brantford, Goderich and smaller ones in Bracebridge and Essex are fine examples of the Carnegie Libraries varied and eclectic architecture.

Sources

Waterloo Public Library - Local History Collection

The Best Gift - Beckman, Langmead, Black

Margaret Zavaros



Old Waterloo Public Library

PIECE OF WATERLOO HERITAGE FOR SALE

The Brubacher house is for sale, home to four generations of Brubachers since its construction in 1862 by John B. and Mary Brubacher. Located at 1070 Highland Road West Kitchener, the house incorporates the

popular architectural style of each generation of Brubachers. The original house is an austere Mennonite construction of red brick (painted yellow) with precise, square cut field stone foundation and double hung windows of six over six. A Queen Anne addition, in buff brick constructed 1890, served as the Doddy House which once

again reflects strict Mennonite propriety. A final addition in 1900 in buff brick, in the Italianate tradition, replaced a wooden summer kitchen. Both additions feature double hung windows of one over one. The house remains structurally sound and is unchanged since family ownership, which ceased in 1964. The wooden balconies have turned balusters and the main door has sidelights and a transom. The affluence and restraint of the Mennonite farming community is clearly evident in each generation's addition.

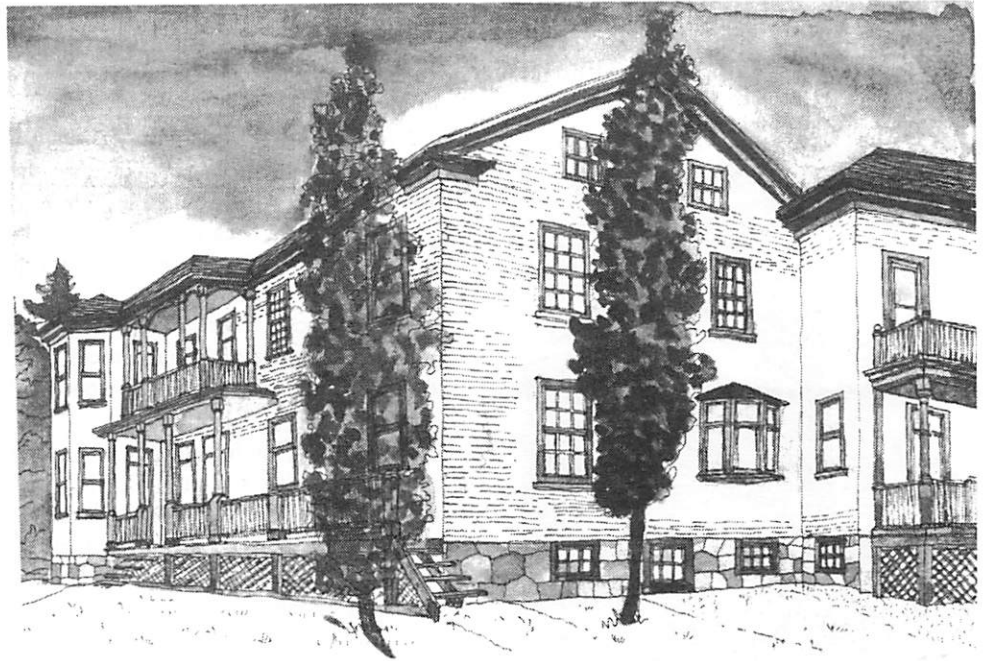
The Brubacher home's historical pedigree is one of the Waterloo region's finest; the first owner of Lot 25 in Waterloo was descended from Hans Brubacher (the son of the first Brubacher on record). Hans Brubacher born in 1665 in the Canton of Zurich in Switzerland, came to the Americas in 1710 and settled in Pennsylvania. Two generations later the great-grandson of the Swiss immigrant settled in Ebytown. John E. Brubacher born 1822, died in 1906, and his wife Catherine Sherk raised his 14 children in the Brubacher home; their descendants lived in the home until 1964. The children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren married and sired a portion of every founding family of Waterloo, from their daughter Elizabeth marrying Jonas Bingeman to Jacob G. Brubacher who married Elmina Hunsburger.

The house, which overlooks a valley and has an unobstructed view from atop a knoll to Highland Road in the distance, requires restoration work to repair recent neglect. Funds are available for restoration work from the province which will provide \$3,000 of matching funds annually for preservation and restoration work for private property; larger grants are available for commercial and institutional properties. The Brubacher house, once home to fifteen children, is on a large lot that can accommodate parking for ten cars, and can be considered as an ideal location for any kind of community housing or community care service.

The Brubacher house is one of the few remaining properties in the Waterloo region which displays each successive owner's desire to marry the style of their generation with that of their forbears and maintain the integrity of each.

Preliminary drawings prepared by John Clinkett Architect (with cost estimates) are available.

Jennifer Chivers-Wilson



Brubacher House as it could look when cleaned up and renovated
Drawn by John Clinkett, architect

OLD POST OFFICE

The former Waterloo Post Office now owned by MKS (Mortice Kern Systems Inc.) (see ACORN XVI 3 Winter 1991) has received an Award of Excellence for renovation and the clock tower restoration at the Annual Meeting of the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation held in early June 1992.

Marg Rowell

Oxford County

WE SAVED OUR JAIL

The Oxford County Jail (1852) is considered one of the oldest in Ontario and is listed in the National Inventory of Historic Buildings. The future of the jail became an emotionally charged debate as the Oxford County Council had voted to raze this beautiful Italianate style brick building.

The jail had been closed by Provincial Order in 1977 for economic reasons. All prisoners from this area were to be transferred to London but were returned to Oxford County Court House for court hearings.

A great many citizens were outraged to hear of this proposed destruction of one of our most historic and architecturally attractive buildings.

A SAVE THE JAIL COMMITTEE was immediately formed from members of the

Oxford Historical Society and others interested in the preservation of our Canadian heritage of land and buildings. At that time, Oxford's Architectural Conservancy Branch had not yet been formed.

THE SAVE THE JAIL COMMITTEE mounted an enthusiastic campaign to drum up public support, create awareness of our cause and to establish and raise money for a "slush" fund.

It is tough psychologically to interest people on the idea of saving a building as low on the social ladder as a jail and converting it into a viable and useful building. Even the local police who needed a new building were not interested. We were determined to save the historic elements and retain the exterior of the building, the jail walls, courtyards and most of the attractive windows.

Our Committee launched an advertising campaign with newspaper and radio advertising. We had 1000 SAVE THE JAIL buttons made and they sold briskly for \$1.00 each. The lapel button featured the comic figure Kilroy, the cartoon jail-bird, peering over the wall, as our logo. This logo was used everywhere and soon our SAVE THE JAIL slogan was known all over the county. KILROY WAS HERE was everywhere and soon County Council learned that citizens were supporting our efforts.

We sought out all possible heritage grants and did receive much support from the Ontario Heritage Foundation, including assistance and \$500 to produce a very attractive coloured poster which also sold well.

An architect was engaged to prepare sketches of how the jail could be renovated. An earlier study had been rejected by the County Councillors.



Woodstock Jail
Oxford Save the Jail committee poster

At the peak of the campaign, on Victoria Day week-end, we opened the jail for inspection and 2,500 people loved the building in an Open House. Free lunch was advertised - bread and water was served - much to the delight of those who came.

On another later occasion a London Free Press Shun-Piker Tour and others were welcome to inspect the jail. Much publicity was obtained when three young people were unwittingly locked in a cell by a "friend". A key could not be found and the Court House caretaker, assisted by a County Councillor, was pressed into action with an acetylene torch to free them.

Finally the whole issue was turned around and Oxford County Council, forever to their credit, agreed to renovate the exterior and recycle the interior for use by the Oxford County Health Unit.

The SAVE THE JAIL COMMITTEE held their heads high when the Grand Opening of the Oxford County Health Unit held its Official Opening on June 29, 1986. All present were greatly impressed with the success of our efforts to have this elegant old building saved and converted into an attractive and functional office and administrative centre for the Health unit.

From dark and dingy to bright and airy the old jail is now one of the high spots in our County's architectural heritage.

The jail exercise yard has been turned

into a beautifully landscaped, treed courtyard. The iron-gated archways have been included in the jail walls. A modern skylight is suitably featured.

A reminder of the building's former use is at the right of the front entrance. It is the death mask of wife-murderer, Thomas Cook, who in 1882 became the first County prisoner to be hanged in the jail's west courtyard.

The contractor's work in the restoration of the old jail was a year-long process, the fight to save it much longer, but a wonderful lesson in heritage preservation.

C.A. Ventin, Architect, Ltd., of Simcoe provided the Oxford County officials with a renewed building they can be proud of. It is one of Woodstock's many architectural show places - an excellent example of a job of restoration and recycling, done with much vision and economic viability.

Helen McDonald

London Region

GERANIUM WALK TOUR OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS

The first Sunday in June is always the date for the London Region Branch tour of heritage buildings known as the "Geranium Walk." This year the theme was Southern Comforts and on June 7 the heritage of old South London was on view starting at 1:00 pm from the Monsignor Feeny Centre for Catholic Education, 165 Elmwood Avenue at Wortley Road. As usual a number of private homes were open to the public and tea was available at Elmwood Presbyterian Church.

WELCOME TO WOODFIELD

Last year the event was located in the Woodfield neighbourhood, just north and east of Downtown London, in an area which is about to become London's first Heritage Conservation District.

Settlement in this neighbourhood dates from 1827 when Major Ira Schofield, one of the area's first magistrates and postmaster, built a log house. In the 1840s Benjamin Cronyn, who later became the first Anglican bishop, built an isolated stone house in a pine forest near the corner of Dundas Street and Adelaide Street. It was appropriately named "The Pines." The dense forest was a good habitat for wild animals and it is said that when the ladies came to visit from Eldon House in London's early townsites at the Forks of the Thames they carried a gun for

protection against wolf attacks. In 1892 Hume Blake Cronyn and his wife Frances Amelia (née Labatt) moved into the house and changed the name to "Woodfield."

With the coming of the Great Western Railway to London in 1853 and the development of oil at Oil Springs in 1857 the area started to develop more completely. Woodfield was the home of doctors, lawyers, oil barons, bankers and factory owners, but there were also workers' cottages. Although development continued to 1930 and later, there is a predominance of late 19th century houses constructed of locally manufactured buff brick. There is a diversity of building forms but the most common styles are Italianate, High Victorian, Queen Anne and Vernacular.



Bishop Cronyn Memorial Anglican Church -
1873, Queens Avenue at William Street
Howard Pulver

BISHOP CRONYN MEMORIAL ANGLICAN CHURCH - 1873

This picturesque High Victorian church is constructed with bichromatic brickwork, low side walls and a steeply pitched roof. The interior woodwork was originally stained and the ceiling plastered. Six years later a number of major alterations were made including the addition of tie beams, ornamental cut ribs and other timbers as well as the transepts and gallery. The original stained glass windows were supplied by the Ontario Stained Glass Works, a local manufacturer. The bellcote at the north side of the front facade gives the structure particular prominence.

The church is dedicated to the memory of Bishop Benjamin Cronyn (1802-1871) who was Rector of St. Paul's (London), Bishop from 1857 to 1871 and played a major role in the development of the Diocese of Huron.

dow is later than the original roof which was covered with wooden shingles. The decorative fascia board under the eaves is an unusual feature.

The first resident was a tenant, Mr. William Stone, manager of the lithographing



527 Princess Avenue - 1899
Designated
Howard Pulver

527 PRINCESS AVENUE - 1899

This spectacular two-and-one-half storey Queen Anne Style house was built for London photographer Frank Cooper. It features a three-storey corner tower with curved glass windows, five tall corbelled chimneys, a gable with an elaborate palladian window, finials on both the gable and tower and an extensive verandah with a pediment at the front entrance.

The entrance has a double-leaf door with bevelled cut glass panels and a transom. The living room to the left of the spacious front hall occupies the tower bay. The interior has unusual decorative detail with fireplaces and stained glass. This was once a rooming house but has been restored, returned to single family use and designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

16 CARTWRIGHT STREET - C. 1880

This is a buff brick veneer cottage of the side-hall plan. An old photograph shows a doorway with sidelights and a transom as well as a gingerbread-trimmed verandah across the front. The five-sided dormer win-

department at the London Free Press.



16 Cartwright Street - c. 1880
Howard Pulver

468 DUFFERIN AVENUE - C. 1902

With a prominent corner location, this house is one of the best examples of Queen Anne



468 Dufferin Avenue - c. 1902
Designated
Howard Pulver

Revival Architecture in London. The house was built for George Mathewson, an executive at the London Free Press, of local buff brick. It has a two-and-one-half storey corner tower with a finial, a gable at the front entrance and a matching gablet at the peak of the slate roof. An outer simple double-

leaf panelled door leads to a second set of doors with ornate Art Nouveau floral designs in dominant green tints. The colour is repeated in the window behind the stairway and in the living room fireplace. There are ornate mouldings around the windows and

doors including a twelve-inch baseboard. The kitchen cupboards and ceramic tiles have been restored to the 1920s.



509 William Street - 1880
Designated
Howard Pulver

509 WILLIAM STREET - 1880

This Italianate house was built for Rowland Dennis, blacksmith and maker of ornamental and architectural wire and iron work, including cresting, finials and vanes. The family business was later known as Dennis-tee. The cresting decorating the bay windows and front porch are examples of the craft. The exterior has a decorated gable, double brackets and dentils under the eaves and decorative keystones in second storey windows. The front doorway has an elegant grape design keystone which was repeated in early stencilling found during renovation in the hall and stairway. The living room features a faux marble fireplace and a three-window bay with panelling below which is echoed in the dining room. The two rooms are divided by an arched doorway with sliding doors.

In the rear yard is one of the few remaining carriage houses with polychromatic brickwork, decorative bargeboard and arched entrance.

These are just five of the nine buildings which were included on the 1991 Geranium Walk. This year's walk allowed people to explore another part of London's heritage.

Howard Pulver

Huron County Region

MENESTUNG BRIDGE

The Menestung Bridge Association in Goderich is progressing with the work on converting the Maitland CPR bridge into a walkway. Most of the planks and railings have been "sold" with names of the buyers to be etched into the wood of each plank. Ecologist students are being hired to help prepare the approaches to the bridge at each end and begin the improvements to the trail and plant materials.

RESTORED PORCH AWARD

A recent competition held in Goderich for best restored porch was won by Mr. and Mrs. P. Scholton of Wellington St. Several other residences in town participated.

MAIN STREET PROGRAM

The Heritage Canada Main Street program in Goderich is somewhat unique in that the program is addressing the greater community. Many meetings have been held in town, visiting architects have provided tips and analysis, and much discussion has resulted. Several shop fronts on the Square have been renovated and restored.

150TH CELEBRATION

The County of Huron is celebrating its 150th year and celebrations will include a heritage walk from Goderich to the historic Van Egmond House near Seaforth. Several donations have been received to support this project.

BLYTH MEMORIAL COMMUNITY HALL

The additions and renovations to the Blyth Memorial Community Hall - used by the Blyth Festival and the village of Blyth - recently received an innovative design award (first prize) sponsored by the London and District Construction Association. The award, presented to local architect Christopher Borgal, acknowledged the over ten years of development of the site which has seen the renovations and upgrading of the 1920s Hall (built as a war memorial) and the linking of the hall with an adjacent turn-of-the-century commercial building (saved from the wrecker's ball by the festival).

RAILTEX

CN Rail recently sold its branch lines between Goderich, Stratford and Exeter. Fortunately, these were not torn up (as were the CPR lines) but instead were sold to a small Texas-based railway company (Railtex). Their new green and beige locomotives are now shipping Goderich salt and local feed along these lines. Railtex has elected to put its new offices into the old Goderich CNR station which will see the salvation of the building, mostly empty since closing of rail traffic on the line in the early 70s, with, at the least, renovations to the structure and possibly a bit of restoration as well.

Christopher Borgal

Ontario Archives Assistance Program

To you the members of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, co-workers in the preservation of Ontario's heritage, we appeal for support in lobbying the Ontario government to make grants available for archives. You, the users of archives, realize all too well the great need for more professional staff, storage and conservation facilities to protect Ontario's documentary past. Funding is also needed to provide the access and service required by the increasing number of researchers.

Provincial support for an archival system for Ontario is essential in order to provide this protection and improved access. Provincial leadership in the form of grants would assist municipalities to put this system in place. Archives require increased funding to bring about the networking of information, now available in libraries, which will provide improved access to Ontario's recorded past. Ontario's archival community does not receive the support from government which is available to the other components of the heritage community. The province spends a little over one dollar per person, the least of any province/territory, to maintain its archives.

A proposal has been submitted to the Minister of Culture and Communications to establish an archives assistance program similar to core-funding programs now available to museums, art galleries and libraries. What is clearly needed are grants specifically designed for archives which meet the needs which are poorly served or unmet by existing heritage grants. Areas of concern

include: archives establishment; acquisition; processing and description of archival materials; conservation; equipment purchases and operating expenses.

The need for special granting programs for archives has been recognized by other provinces, notably Quebec and British Columbia. Such a program would provide the following benefits to archives and archivists in the province:

- *assistance for smaller institutions and community-based archives in the establishment and achievement of a standard for professional operation;*
- *encouragement for established, professionally-staffed archival institutions providing a public service, regardless of their organizational context;*
- *provision of a level of support for facilities-improvement and conservation in all archival institutions, support that is essential for adequate preservation of our documentary heritage;*
- *encouragement of the establishment of a genuine provincial archival system which would enhance inter-institutional communications and rational and co-operative acquisition policies;*
- *furtherance of the development of accepted institutional standards for archives in Ontario.*

The social and cultural benefits to the province would include:

- *assistance to local governments that must make records available for research or public examination under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act;*
- *stimulation, through the establishment of archives and enhancement of archival programs, of community, institutional and corporate participation in the preservation of their documentary heritage;*
- *improvement in the quality and range of archival information sources and services to all media.*

The archivists of Ontario are appealing to you to convey to the provincial government your support of a proposal made to the Minister of Culture and Communications on

behalf of Ontario archives, entitled ONTARIO GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR HERITAGE ORGANIZATION: A PROGRAM FOR ARCHIVES (1990).

A letter to the Minister, with a copy to the Treasurer of Ontario and your M.P.P., would be most appreciated. The letter need merely state that you support the above program and why. Please help Ontario's archivists to preserve our documentary heritage for future generations.

The Honourable Karen Haslam
Minister of Culture and Communications
10 Adelaide St. E.
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J3

The Honourable Floyd Laughren
Treasurer of Ontario
7th Floor, Frost Building South
7 Queen's Park Crescent
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1Y7

Signs & Awnings In Historic Areas

Signs and awnings are a vital part of an historic area. With a multitude of metal,

plastic and illuminated signs now on the market, there has been a tendency to limit signage on historic buildings. However, if signs are appropriately designed and painted they can do much to revitalize the Victorian tradition of large, bold and attractive signage.

In 1988, the city of Saint John prepared a Sign And Awning Guideline for the Trinity Royal Preservation Area. The following is some of the text and illustrations from their guideline.

Signs and awnings were always a vital part of the Trinity Royal scene. The Victorian merchants were hardheaded businessmen who took themselves and their business seriously. Their confidence was reflected in assertive signs which were bold, plain and plentiful. Most commercial buildings were owner-occupied and the 'men of property' who built them did not hesitate to demonstrate their ownership and advertise their merchandise wherever the opportunity presented itself; they carved their names permanently into building facades; they placed signs above, below and inside store front windows, in doorways, on side walls and even on roofs; in the warehouse tradition, they ran full width signs across upper facades.



The craftsmanship and sturdy design of this Victorian sign are evident. The guidelines aim to achieve the same quality.

Lettering was in bold, no-nonsense styles. Letters, constructed of wood, were individually wall-mounted or centred on sign boards. Only occasionally did the Victorian love of ornament reveal itself in a flourish, a scroll or a slash of diagonal script. Quality workmanship was evident in the hand-carved letters, and in the moulded frames with which boards were always finished.

Skilled sail makers were readily available in the old port of Saint John, and canvas awnings were commonplace. Their purpose was to shelter customers and shade merchandise, and their design was standard and functional - retractable and fabricated of unbleached cotton, sometimes woven with a stripe, sometimes painted and always finished with a scalloped edge. Some proprietors took advantage of the end panels of awnings to obtain extra advertising space; these locations took the place of projecting signs, which were extremely rare.

Trinity Royal is notable for its fine Victorian buildings which have remained largely intact for a century. The photographic record shows that signs and awnings were a dominant feature of the original streets, and without them, the true character of the area is altered and incomplete. Signs were well crafted and boldly utilitarian; awnings were functional and roomy.

Today, Trinity Royal remains an active and prosperous business area. The design philosophy towards new signs and awnings is to recapture the vigorous and enterprising spirit of the Victorian era - a spirit that requires signs and awnings to be bold and plentiful, and of design and material in the Victorian mould. This does not infer a turning back of the clock, but an emphasis on preserving a distinct and historic character that will be good for business too!

Guidelines

- *Design bold and utilitarian signs in the Victorian tradition of Saint John.*
- *Use a variety of sign locations such as storefront, upper wall, roof and window.*
- *Use traditional materials wherever possible.*
- *Use dark colours and strong contrasts.*
- *Use basic shapes.*
- *Use straightforward lettering.*

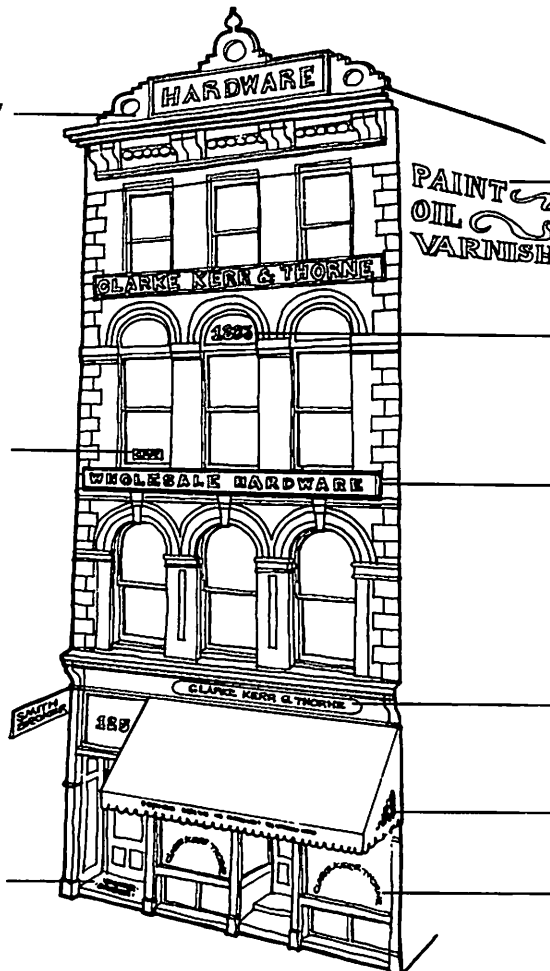
LOCATION OF SIGNS AND AWNINGS

ROOF SIGN. Popular in Victorian Trinity Royal. Should extend across full width of facade and have a decorative profile.

WINDOW SIGN. Upper windows as well as storefront windows were used for advertisement.

PROJECTING SIGN. Rarely used in Victorian Trinity Royal. Should be subsidiary to storefront signs and of similar simple design.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGN. Floor mosaic signs present another opportunity for advertisement.



PAINTED WALL SIGN. Should be large and decorative on side walls. Preserve existing painted wall signs.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGN. Preserve and restore existing date and name panels. Introduce into new buildings.

WALL SIGN. Used extensively in Victorian Trinity Royal. Should extend across full width of facade.

STOREFRONT SIGN. Principal location for displaying name of business. Should fit neatly into cornice above storefront.

AWNING. Should be large and roomy. Lettering on side panels and flaps only.

WINDOW SIGN. A secondary but effective signage area, particularly for advertising services.



Sign awnings are critical to the character of the streetscape.
Nicholas Hill

News from Niagara

A slow spring has not deterred visitors, and as the days go by and the sun comes out they flock into old Niagara-on-the-Lake attracting further investment in renovation and additions to older buildings and even new structures within the commercial core, a Heritage Conservation District. The LACAC is kept busy. But still the concept of discipline in this supposedly protected area is hard to establish. With a new council, the process of aculturalization (to use a good Americanism) begins all over again. The Lord Mayor has managed to set up a Heritage Fund with the cooperation of the Chamber of Commerce, strangely leaving other organizations equally if not more committed to old Niagara's preservation rather out in the cold - c'est la vie! ou la mort!!

Queen Street, last year the subject of a PRIDE improvement program, was partially landscaped to designs by The Landplan Collaborative of Guelph. A new pavement and sidewalks emerged, paved surfaces to hard wear areas and plantings where grass boulevards were no longer surviving. A blaze of tulips is greeting spring visitors and one or two new trees. Lighting on Queen Street retained the high-bay system complemented by lanterns of traditional design carefully

located by LACAC as supplementary pedestrian lighting. These were intended to serve as subtle accents, but the substitution of a mercury-vapour head has somewhat distorted the effect.

Other changes are occurring to public spaces, contrary to the character of the Heritage Conservation District and in some cases against the recommendations of the Plan devised by Nicholas Hill, seemingly not fully understood and possibly unrecognized by those responsible for the difficulties.

Regrettably the new LACAC chairman, Faye Whitfield, a strong and expressive Australian, remarkably fresh and forthright in her approach, is moving to the United States with her husband and Niagara has lost a real supporter of its preservation cause. The Whitfields had taken on the Field House on the Niagara River Parkway, a designated property covered by an easement, which they managed to sell in short order.

Despite various vicissitudes, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy is helping to promote an umbrella organization of local groups interested and concerned in the area's heritage including the Niagara Historical Society, the Niagara Foundation and the Friends of Fort George. Such an organization can be coordinated and continuing support to local preservation activity, a

boost to LACAC's efforts too. LACAC is setting up a series of seminars locally to promote the understanding of the Ontario Heritage Act and its ramifications, particularly with regard to Part 4 and individual building designation as well as Districts under part 5, intending to cooperate with local realtors to promote understanding. Citizens of the village of Queenston are making enquiry again about the possibility of a Heritage Conservation District there.

PENINSULA NEWS - PUBLICATIONS

In other areas of the Peninsula there are also activities of interest, some even of concern such as the threatened asphalt plant cheek-by-jowl with Beechlands, the fascinating house of Thomas Brock Fuller, first Anglican Bishop of Niagara. The house is located on a small farm just outside the main urban area of the city of Thorold. That same city had the ACO's Advisory Board undertake a number of studies, some of which you can read about elsewhere in this issue, another an exploration made of the possibility of a Heritage Conservation district in the old Welland Canal village of Port Robinson. Another publication of interest is expected in the future from the south-western edge of the area namely a history of Wainfleet Township. And finally the Niagara Foundation has had its illustrated glossary of historical/architectural terms, *The Early Architecture of the Town and Township of Niagara* reprinted in a slightly handier but no smaller format, this time in black and white with a spiral binder so that the pages lie flat when opened. For any of you fortunate enough to have purchased a copy of the original 500 numbered copies (at \$25.00 in 1967) they are virtually impossible to find and command prices, we have heard, up to \$250.00 and likely to go still higher.

IN THE GARDEN

Meanwhile in the garden the crown imperials (*Fritillaria imperialis*) have been spectacular this year, tall, majestic, gloriously splendid with their rings of nodding bright yellow, orange or rust-red flowers below a crown of green and on a stem above whorls of fresh green leaves. From the skunky aroma as they push up early in the spring through the soil, a strange pervasiveness evocative of a Victorian garden, to their handsome blossoms and form one is always reminded of the legend of their strange scent

and principal shade that they sprang up at the scene where Achilles cut his heel, hence the smell and colour. But this writer has had some success in preventing rodent damage to shrubs by underplanting with crown imperials: the strong odour apparently works.

Peter John Stokes



Crown Imperials in the garden of Peter and Ann Stokes
Peter Stokes

Coming Events

GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, June 13, 1992; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Meet An Organic Gardening Expert
at The White House, 83 Gage St., 11 to 4, Refreshments

Spend a day visiting a selection of the fine gardens in **NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE**. Some are large, some are small, all are charming and provide the opportunity to see another, more private side of the Old Town.

To reserve tickets (\$10): The Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy
make cheque payable to: P.O. Box 1582, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. L0S 1J0.

(Reserved tickets to be collected from our prominently placed Booth at the corner of Queen St. (the main street) and Simcoe St. from 9:30 a.m. on the day of the Garden Tour.)

Support the aims of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy to protect and preserve the Old Town's unique character for the benefit of present and future generations.

For information call:

Toronto (416) 486-0093 Niagara-on-the-Lake (416) 468-3328
or (416) 468-5519

Please do come prepared to stroll from garden to garden. We suggest flat shoes.
Tour will be held rain or shine.

Advisory Board Reports

Summary of Report re:
THE OLD FRAME SCHOOL
C. 1840
PORT ROBINSON, ONTARIO

The site, on the east side of Front Street in the village of Port Robinson, now part of the City of Thorold, was visited on two occasions recently and the exterior and interior examined.

The building, a small frame building with low-pitched gable roof to the street, was moved to this site about 1910 and converted to a grocery store. Now with a boomtown front above plate glass show windows and obscure glass transoms the building still exhibits signs of its earlier origin with two filled-in windows to the side, and others visible from within the addition to the rear.

A pre-1910 illustration shows the building located to the west of the present community centre, the Old Brick School of 1863. About 1900 the frame structure was used for overflow from the brick school. By this time the frame school had probably been recled in its present clapboard set at 5" more or less to the weather, yet wire-nailed. The eaves also had sloped soffits, the building without characteristic eaves returns. In front was a small projecting vestibule with roof of slightly steeper pitch.

The interior now exhibits the change to a store with shelving along side and back walls and a pressed "tin" or sheet metal ceiling with coved edges elaborately patterned. Both exterior and interior now require maintenance to renew finishes, the exterior also repairs to boomtown front and shopfront detail.

The original building is difficult to date for it is in the neo-Classical tradition in the local vernacular which had been modified already when the old photograph was taken. With the hewn sills, unpeeled log joists and accordion (split and expanded board) lath to the ceiling it is likely before 1850. Hence the date chosen of c.1840.

However the changes wrought to create the store seem to render this reincarnation as its more significant state. The building has been offered for relocation, but no arrangements for gift or purchase have been negotiated. Should it not be taken in hand it is possible the "tin" ceiling will be retrieved for a restoration elsewhere and the building demolished.

There is one tantalizing alternative

worth exploring, namely moving the building, perhaps back to or close to its original site as part of the community centre complex to offer space for a local branch of the public library. This would relieve the present centre of this responsibility where valuable space is only intermittently used. Furthermore the conversion to library use would require minimal disturbance to the store arrangement, the grocery shelves serving books, the storefront as a welcome to this important local institution. However should funds be short perhaps moving and mothballing, anticipating its future use as the local library, could be entertained.

Peter John Stokes



The old frame school, Port Robinson, moved and converted to a store c. 1910
Peter John Stokes

Summary of Report re:
THE OLD RED BRICK SCHOOL
1863
JOHN LATSHAW, ARCHITECT
WILLIAM WILSON, BUILDER
PORT ROBINSON, ONTARIO

The Old Red Brick School, admired on many occasions, yet shocked by the modern addition made to it, was the subject of a more intensive investigation in December of 1991.

The building occupies its original corner site facing, but well set back from, Cross Street at the corner of South Street, a relatively level property of perhaps three quarters of an acre occupying possibly three lots of the old village survey. The building was designed by the noted local architect, John Latshaw, also responsible for other Niagara area building, including his collaboration as supervisor on Kivas Tully's Welland County courthouse of 1855.

The original structure is a high single storey in local small red brick laid in common bond above a cut stone plinth crowning

a rubble stone foundation. The front is a three bay design with medium pitch gable roof with sloped soffits, the entrance having a small projecting, but integral, vestibule in brick. Both vestibule and main block are adorned with spear finials-cum-ball pendants at peaks and lower edges of the verges. Signs of a former built-in gutter survive in a protruding downspout in the west eaves of the vestibule, suggesting that this was an original detail elsewhere. The south front has two round-headed windows, with sash of six panes over six flanking the vestibule, and a large roundel in the gable now painted white, but possibly the identification and date of the school originally. The side elevation is of four bays, with windows evenly

spaced but set towards the rear to permit small cloakrooms towards the front. Windows are tall round-headed openings with original divided sash of nine panes over nine. A rebuilt chimney, following the original panelled design, rises above the roof between the second and third windows. A pre-1910 illustration, with the Old Frame School still in position to the west, shows the brick school with a large Italianate bell-cot resembling a belvedere, its roof a pagoda shape.

The Old Red Brick School is therefore a most interesting architectural hybrid, a neo-Classical form bejewelled with Italianate trimmings, Gothic Revival baubles and a twirl of chinoiserie. It takes an accomplished architect like Latshaw to carry it off as such a modest result.

This original section of the structure, however is suffering from certain problems and needs some careful conservation on the exterior including attention to foundations and lower brickwork as well as painting. Some of these difficulties appear to ensue

from improper application of the relatively new wood shingle roof and omission of historical details such as cornice gutter.

Before discussing the interior, which is a considerable contrast, it is important to comment on the modern concrete block lean-to added to the east side for this has compromised the appearance although it may have helped save the original building in providing much needed amenities to serve the function as a community centre. Both the placement and form as well as the materials of the addition are unfortunate, and had the old building been designated there might have been guidance forthcoming to avoid such trouble. In constructing the addition the front and back walls of the old building were extended in concrete block: a setback should have been made to favour the pre-eminence of the original school. Then the roof was extended as a broken-pitch saltbox which emphasizes a lopsided effect and resulted in the loss of the finial/pendant detail at the lower edge, thus, again, destroying the symmetry of the original. The wall materials, concrete block and the horizontal siding filling in the triangle above, provide an unnecessary contrast. Neither would brick have been a suitable alternative for the form and mass would have vied with the original. An unsightly exhaust system also depreciates the south face of the lean-to.

Recommendations include the recasting of this addition to set back the face by reconstructing the front wall and rebuilding of the roof as a hip shape with horizontal eaves across the front. This would expose the south-east corner of the original brick school, allowing replacement of the roof ornament and restoring the dominance of the old building to the composition. Furthermore the wing could be covered in wood board and batten, finished with a heavy-bodied stain of appropriate historic hue, the exterior of the wall insulated in the process and the fenestration improved. The exhaust system would be relocated; preferably entirely out of view.

Internally the old building is a decided shock, a somewhat bland, but comfortable and convenient modern interior, well lighted artificially and fully heated and air-conditioned. The only daylight is from the west side windows reduced to their nine-paned lower sash. Thus the full majesty of the original classroom with its high ceiling and regal windows can no longer be appreciated. The new addition is the commissariat with a games room behind, the latter now used only on two days a week as the local branch of

the public library. A suggestion has been made to have the library occupy the relocated Old Frame School.

It is recommended that if designation of the Old Brick School is not in place that its protection under part 4 of the Ontario Heritage Act be sought, primarily in the conservation of the exterior of the old build-

ing and the enhancement of the newer wing to be more sympathetic while still complementary to the original school. At the same time the interior of the classroom should be included anticipating the eventual restoration of that handsome space.

Peter John Stokes



Old brick school, Port Robinson, now a community centre with modern addition
Peter John Stokes

Summary of Report re: BEAVERDAMS CHURCH, 1832

The site was visited and the interior examined in the company of Mrs. R.C. Summers, well-known local historian, in early December 1991.

Beaverdams Church, still on its original site, occupies the high point of the property, well set back from the old road, with Gibson Lake and its extensions behind and on the other side of the approach. The graveyard, a smaller section to the south, extends mainly to the west.

The building, constructed of frame and clapboarded, is two storeys high, roughly forty feet by fifty-four feet, with a low-pitched gable roof with pediment to the front, matching pilastered entrances set well in from the corners and windows aligned above. Some original or very old clapboard, at roughly 6" to the weather, survives on the north front. Signs of a built-in cornice gutter are indicated by the later reconstruction of the eaves. Down the sides are five windows to the ground floor, the centre three wider apart than those adjoining at the end. Later

wide clapboard has been used to close in the three windows upstairs in the west side towards the rear, the two windows towards the rear opposite. Early twentieth century cove siding covers the south end and the two upper windows and there are neither eaves returns nor pediment. The west side also has an incongruous modern brick chimney towards the front, which replaces two earlier, but not original stacks inside the south end.

The interior is a much altered space, some of the major changes made early in its history, and believed to have happened about 1847 when the new stone church in the rising canal town of Thorold took its place. Thus the galleries appear to have been abandoned, the ceiling in the centre filled in between to create a single-storey sanctuary. The sanctuary seems to have been reduced further, then or later in the refurbishing of 1879, so that a vestibule or narthex across the north end was created. A single stair, appearing to be original, occupies the north-west corner, its counterpart opposite since removed and a small boarded room created. Within the sanctuary a dais has been built across the south end with small corner rooms at either end. Much

original interior detail does survive, such as the delicately beaded horizontal boarding above the plain board wainscot to the narthex, but within the sanctuary later finishes and newer trim have been applied. Old bench pews, straight-backed and puritanical in appearance, are arranged in a centre block, divided down the middle, and a range down both sides, the handsome early box stove of Dundee pattern set in the west side.

Both the staircase details, with bull-nosed ends to both risers and treads projecting beyond the outer string and shaped plank newel supporting the heavy round-topped handrail, as well as the bold, turned Tuscan columns with emphasized entasis combined with noticeable necking towards the top are very reminiscent of German-inspired detailing seen in the Waterloo region and elsewhere where such influences are felt. The structure too is immensely sturdy and suggests local labour and not necessarily the trained builder as authors of the building. For instance the roof with hewn rafters halved and pinned at the ridge, rest on heavy hewn purlins carried by braced posts standing on the beams above the gallery ceiling, but between the supporting columns.



Beaverdams Church 1832, Thorold, from causeway
Peter John Stokes

On the second floor front, corresponding with the space below, is a long, narrow room, refinished with vertical-jointed plywood of modern origin. Passing through the door into the space beyond, probably largely disused for almost a century and a half, is the old gallery which occupied originally three sides, that to the north now the newer meeting room. The gallery with a vaulted centre to the ceiling, the old stone stove-pipe thimble still in the middle, probably to a single

stack above, has simple low, panelled but unmoulded fronts and broad moulded cap, the same Tuscan columns as below occurring at the third points in the length of the building. Architraves to openings, where original, are plain with beaded inner edge. Bench type pews, like those below, rise in tiers towards the back, most of them surviving but some damaged on the west side, only the third section in the south-east corner still in place opposite. What is so startling is that the woodwork upstairs is unpainted and now aged to a deep golden or nut brown colour, the plaster, applied to accordion (split and expanded board) lath, still a stark white, the whole giving very much the impression of an early meeting house.

The various changes made including wiring and rudimentary heating, plus the miscellaneous refinishing, particularly on the exterior, were needed to keep the building in continued use and standing, but it is an increasing burden on those in charge. Despite the church in Thorold, now Trinity United, being the principal place of worship, Beaverdams Church continues to have a loyal following who sustain it and use it whenever possible to the benefit of the community.

Various items of its conservation have to be addressed and some approaches may require decisions based on the philosophies involved not only in its treatment, but also in its use. The principal concerns include repairs of the foundations and correction of the grading towards the front, these works possibly also involving repair to the sills of the structure. Fortunately original clapboard to the front can serve in the restoration of cladding elsewhere. In the process insulation of walls and reconstruction using the Macpherson House Method (or wood cavity



Beaverdams Church original interior stair
Peter John Stokes

wall) might be considered to improve the performance of the building. But the restoration will also require the selection of proper woodwork details of starter board, corner board and architraves, the last, for windows at least, perhaps surviving on the north front, the doorcases more easily restored for these are largely intact. However new entrance doors, to an appropriate pattern, which might be a flush-beaded six-panel design to the exterior, will be required and the sash, after all the windows are reopened, should be restored to their twelve-over twelve configuration in 8" x 10" glass. For this a muntin or glazing bar profile must be chosen. The detail of the tympanum to the pediment, now cloaked in diagonal pattern interlocking asphalt shingle, needs to be explored. Relatively easy to restore, however, are the cornice gutters, combining the verge detail with the pediment band perhaps.

The interior might be left as it is or restored progressively or in part. A program for this needs to be drawn up. Basically two approaches are possible, the more drastic, perhaps least realistic and therefore not supportable, is to restore the building as the original Methodist meeting house of 1832, which appears to have survived a bare fifteen years. A more acceptable course would seem to leave some or all of the present arrangements, restoring original finishes and features progressively. Thus the gallery could be left closed off, the plaster repaired only where required, the remaining woodwork reset but not necessarily fully restored, the space either viewed on occasion via a folding panelled partition upstairs and/or through wide-angle viewing panels or lenses set in the ceiling below.

To accomplish this it is recommended that designation under Part 4 of the Ontario Heritage Act be sought by the city of Thorold for Beaverdams Church to ensure its future protection and proper conservation. This is intended to help the Trustees to accomplish the task progressively with the help of public funds from the community generally, the same community on whose behalf they and their predecessors have sustained this amenity and asset over the years.

Peter John Stokes

ARCHITECT WINS AWARD FOR THEATRE EXPANSION

At the second Annual Innovative Design Awards held in London, Ontario, the architectural company of Christopher Borgal Architects Inc. was awarded the Innovative Design Award for the Blyth Festival project. Principal Christopher Borgal accepted the award on behalf of his company and the consultants involved, Maitland Engineering Services Ltd. and V.J. Nash and Associates; also present were Reeve Dave Lee and Councillor Shirley Fyffe of the Village of Blyth, and Carol Irwin, Past President of the Blyth Festival. The award is sponsored by the London & District Construction Association, the Association of Architectural Technologists of Ontario, Construction Specifications Canada, and the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers. The award is given in recognition of the achievements of design professionals and to promote design team efforts towards achieving excellence in all aspects of innovative building design. At the first Design Awards, held last year, Christopher Borgal Architects Inc. received an Award of Merit for their innovative design of the Huron County Museum in Goderich.

In the expansion of the Blyth Festival facilities, several issues were deemed critical as early as 1978. These included enhancing the site to ensure continued community use as the village's 'Hall' (still

owned by the Village of Blyth); maintaining the exterior integrity of the original Hall and adjacent commercial building (only the roof and front shop cornice of the latter were modified to integrate with the remainder of the complex); minimizing the apparent impact on the street to avoid the dislocation such a large development could have had to a community of only 900; improving the quality of the empty grassed area between the two buildings to create a pocket park capable of being used for civic events (with a canopy to shelter visitors during bad weather); and allowing the structure to be opened in various ways to allow the public more use and access.

The work included creation of a grade level public entry vestibule at the west side of the landscaped park (at basement level of the original Hall). An elevator permits access to all floors of the theatre. The basement of the original theatre, always used as a 'lobby' and meeting area (there was no lobby on the original structure) is improved and now has access to the theatre floors via three stairs. The art gallery, focused on the centre of the exterior park, can be opened to allow patrons flowing from the box office to the theatre to pass through - thus augmenting attendance to the gallery itself. The upper floor of the 'link', primarily backstage facilities, connects to the renovated upper floor of the commercial structure and its new main stage-sized rehearsal hall via the new loading dock area. The link's facade, evoking a 1920s commer-



Blyth Memorial Community Hall
Tim Jacobs, Christopher Borgal

cial street facade, extends behind the canopy to grade and is topped with a 1990 date stone.

'We are extremely pleased with the increased use of Memorial Hall', said Don McCaffrey, Chairman of the Festival's Building Committee. 'A tremendous deal of credit is due to the architect, Chris Borgal, for his sensitivity to the sacredness of Memorial Hall and his understanding of the needs of the theatre, in designing a facility that accommodates our needs, while enhancing Memorial Hall, a real living monument to our veterans'.

HOUSE TO BE MOVED



This stone 1 1/2 storey Gothic Style house is located at 80 Dundas St. E., in Cambridge near highway 8 toward Hamilton. It has a segmentally arched window in the gable and a date stone of 1855. It is a three bay centre hall plan. The front door has a transom and side lights. The front wall is constructed of cut granite fieldstone with limestone quoins.

The interior is intact with original trim, doors and hardware.

This house is available free to anyone who will move it from the site at their own expense. It is in the way of development and must be moved by the fall.

Contact: David J. Scott, Vice-President
West End Development Corp
625 Evans Ave.
Toronto, M8W 2W5
(416) 255-3451
Fax 255-1146

Tribute

KENNETH HARRY JOHN
CLARKE, C.M., B.S.C., N.D.C.,
P.ENG.

With fond remembrance we wish to note to our members and readers that Ken Clarke, for many years a great supporter of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and its vital fundraiser for our activities, particularly in the 1970s, died peacefully at home on the 31st of March 1992 in his eighty-first year.

He had led a full and especially interesting life engaging in so many activities during his working career and well into his retirement years, holding various executive positions in a great variety of businesses and serving in an advisory capacity in numerous Canadian and international organizations. Among his many responsibilities he served as President, Marketing Division of Canada and International Sales Ltd. of INCO Limited, International Chairman of Business and Industry Advisory Committee to O.C.E.D. Paris; International President Pacific Basin Economic Council, San Francisco, U.S.A.; President Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Stratford, Ontario; Delegate, Law of the Sea Conference, Geneva and New York, among others.

Born in Toronto he graduated as a Metallurgical Engineer from the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, University of Toronto in 1936, being also at the National Defence College, Kingston 1953-54. He received the Centennial Medal in 1967, Order of Canada in 1981, was admitted to University of Toronto Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering Hall of Distinction in 1984, and was also in the Delta Tau Delta Hall of Fame.

He leaves his wife Margaret E. (Peggy) Winter and son Ken H.J. Clarke. The Clarkes for many years have enjoyed the old Aylesworth Farm in Newburgh where a few years ago they much enlarged their historic stone house pictured in *Rogues' Hollow*.

Ken will be remembered by many for his zest and very active participation in so many fields and causes, not the least for his help and influence in keeping the ACO afloat financially in very critical times. We trust that his family will take heart that he left so many grateful people with happy memories of him.

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